



Arbor Day in Moraga

By Sophie Braccini



Beautification committee plants a Western Redbud on Arbor Day with (left to right): David Wood, Karen Mendonca, Vera Potapenko, Mayor Deschambault, Town Manager Vince, Christine Kuckuk, and Jim Kline Photo Sophie Braccini

The Moraga Beautification and Tree Planting Committee was reminded of J. Sterling Morton when they planted a Western Redbud on the first Moraga Arbor Day on April 25th at the Hacienda de las Flores. Sterling was a Nebraska pioneer, a lover of nature who started the tradition.

On January 4, 1872, Morton proposed a tree-planting holiday to be called "Arbor Day." The date was set for April 10, 1872. Prizes were offered to counties and indi-

viduals for planting properly the largest number of trees on that day. It was estimated that more than one million trees were planted in Nebraska on the first Arbor Day.

With one tree planted, Moraga had a more modest start than Nebraska, but the Committee and the Mayor have much larger ambitions. ".1 tree per resident seems a reasonable goal," said the Mayor, "that would amount to about 2000 new trees." One way to get there would be to implement a "cut 1 buy

4" ordinance, similar to those in Hercules and El Cerrito. There, when a resident cuts down a tree he must replant four, either on his property or in the public domain.

"The Beautification Committee could review the possibilities of such an ordinance," said the Mayor. Christine Kuckuk, Chair of the Committee, believes that Moraga residents want more trees, "What is needed is a study of where these trees should be planted so they can be established for the long term."